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COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

TOPIC Merseburg Airfield

EVALUATION

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DATE OF CONTENT 18 May to 4 June 1952

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED

1 July 1952

REFERENCES

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PAGES 5

ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

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REMARKS

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1. The following air activity                      at the Merseburg airfield between 18 and 27 May 1952:

Date in <u>May</u>	Observations	Weather
18	No flying	
19	Between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., 3 MiG-15s took off two or three times and practiced flying	Fair, cloud base at 2,000 meters
20	Between 5:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., intensive flying by MiG-15s in flight formations	Fair
21	Between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., flying in elements of two	Partly cloudy, cloud base at about 1,500 meters
22	Between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., individual flights	Sky overcast, cloud base at about 1,000 meters
23	Between 8:15 a.m. and 4 p.m., formation flying by MiG-15s in formations of two or more; five planes <u>                    </u> <u>                    </u> (1)	Sky overcast, cloud base at about 2,000 meters
24	Between 9 and 9:30 a.m., two planes flew individually; at 4:28 p.m., 7 MiG-15s took off, circled once over the field and headed north; the planes were not observed returning to the field until 26 May (2)	Overcast

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Date in  
MayObservationsWeather

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At 11 a.m., 2 MiG-15s flying in formation crossed the town several times and landed at 11:30 a.m.; the planes [redacted] They belonged to the group parked near the runway on the east edge of the field.

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Between 11:10 and 3 p.m., 2 MiG-15s flew individually.

Rain

27

No flying

Favorable

2. Between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on 28 May, flying was practiced. The sky was overcast, the cloud base being at an altitude of 800 meters. It was raining, and the visibility was limited to 4 km. A type-29 with the No 912Y took off eight to ten times. (4) After the take-off, the plane disappeared in the clouds. Each flight lasted almost exactly 45 minutes. Before landing, the plane approached from the east, crossed the field at an altitude of about 300 meters and landed in a left curve. [redacted] not far from the airfield that, during at least three landings, the plane stopped at the end of the runway and was towed away by a truck. At the other landings, however, the plane taxied back to the take-off point. The crews, who entered and left over the wings, were channelled at the east end of the runway. Nine MiG-15s, including two with the [redacted], were parked on the east edge of the runway. Between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. on 29 May, about six MiG-15s practiced flying in elements of two. They remained in the air for 25 to 35 minutes. Between 8:45 a.m. and 5:45 p.m. on 30 May, about 16 MiG-15s were observed flying in flight formations. The sky was almost overcast at an altitude of 1,500 meters. [redacted]

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(5) Between 3 and 3:55 p.m., a MiG-15 [redacted] fitted with auxiliary fuel tanks was in the air. The flight time of 55 minutes by a MiG-15 is the longest [redacted] Two type-29s with the [redacted] made individual flights throughout the day. All MiG-15s, including the type-29s, always flew with auxiliary fuel tanks which were painted darker than their silver wings.

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3. Between 7:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on 31 May, there was flying in fair weather. At 7:30 a.m., [redacted] the noise of a conventional aircraft [redacted] an II-2 crossed the field from east to west. When the plane was beyond the field border, four parachutists jumped from an altitude of about 800 meters. The parachutes opened at a distance of about 60 meters from the plane, at intervals of about 3 seconds. The II-2 made two other flights during each of which four parachutists were dropped. The parachute of the last jumper did not open completely but formed a long sack so that it dropped at a high speed. Four

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parachutists jumped from an approaching LI-2 at 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. respectively. About 10 a.m., two other LI-2s landed at the field coming from the east. The planes had on their rudder assemblies a marking representing an open parachute painted in white and a suspended jumper in black. (6)

4. On 1 June, there was no flying. The weather was favorable. Between 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. on 2 June, local flying was practiced by individual MIG-15s. The weather was cloudless. Between 3 and 5 p.m., parachute jumps were again made from LI-2s. It was again observed that two parachutes did not open completely but formed long sacks. (7) At 10:30 a.m., three U-2s landed. These planes differed from previously observed U-2s; a cabin roof covered the two seats. The larger portion of the roof was made of plexiglass. The three U-2s were repeatedly observed flying on the following days. (8) At 3:30 p.m., a twin-engine plane with double rudder assembly crossed the town at an altitude of about 2,000 meters. The plane towed a sleeve target on a white rope which was about 250 meters long. [redacted] approach flights were made at the sleeve target.

5. Between 8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. on 3 June, individual flights were made by MIG-15s which remained aloft for 30 to 45 minutes. The sky was almost cloudless. After the take-off, the planes headed west and returned from that direction after about 20 minutes. Then, they crossed the field heading east. After about 15 minutes the planes returned to the field, flew over it and landed flying a left curve. On 4 June, there was the same air activity and weather condition as on 3 June. [redacted] about 400 meters west of the west edge of the field that 22 MIG-15s and type-29s, 3 LI-2s, 2 Tu-2s and 3 U-2s were parked at the field. (9)

6. At 5:10 p.m. on 30 May, AA guns arrived at the airfield. [redacted] from a point in the vicinity of the field that 25 to 30 three-axle trucks and 18 AA guns towed by trucks moved on to the landing field. Six guns were emplaced at the edge of the field, and the other 12 guns were emplaced near the target range. The guns which were covered with tarpaulins had a gun shield. On 4 June, six guns were emplaced southeast of the eastern end of the runway. The emplacement was round and about 100 meters in diameter. Ten three-axle trucks and 3 twin-axle trucks were parked west of the emplacement. Not far from the guns, there were 30 earth brown tents each about 2.5 meters high and about 4 meters in diameter. Each tent had an opening at its northwestern side which was about 1.75 meters high. The tents were arranged in five rows of six tents each. The second AA gun emplacement, only embankments and one barrel of which could be observed, was northeast of the western hangar. The third emplacement which was near the target ranges was partially camouflaged by trees. Seven walls of earth, three gun shields and three searchlights, about 60 cm in diameter and mounted on platforms were observed there. In the middle of the emplacement there was a set with a horn-like device, about 2 meters in diameter which seemed to be a sound locator. (10)

7. Before the AAA unit arrived at the field, only individual soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets were observed there. After its arrival, the number of soldiers wearing this service color increased. The field was occupied by an estimated 900 to 1,100 men who wore black-bordered blue epaulets.

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8. The number of guards at the field had considerably increased during the second half of May. Spies were frequently arrested by the sentries.

9. The previously reported radar set was no longer observed. (11)

10. Motor vehicles observed entering and leaving the field included: ambulance [redacted] the latter two driven by soldiers wearing red-bordered black epaulets, and radio truck [redacted], parked near the radio installation with five masts.

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[redacted] Comments.

- (1) The aircraft [redacted], which are observed for the first time with units of the Twenty-Fourth Air Army, are probably assigned to the newly arrived MiG-15s. [redacted] was previously observed in Koethen, and [redacted] in Zerbst. It cannot be determined whether these aircraft were turned over to the fighter regiment in Merseburg or whether they made only intermediate landings there. [redacted] 15 April on a jet fighter crate which had arrived in Koethen coming from the U.S.S.R.

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Merseburg indicates that some of the many new MiG-15s which were dispatched to Koethen were distributed to other units.

- (2) These aircraft possibly belong to Zerbst airfield. Another [redacted] continually observed that some aircraft of a unit stationed in Zerbst flew over Merseburg airfield. The aircraft are probably alert planes detached to Merseburg airfield. These planes, under the control of the ground station in Merseburg, probably attacked the French commercial plane on 29 April.

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- (3) The assignment of the aircraft to the aircraft group, probably of alert planes, on the eastern edge of the field, and the aircraft [redacted], which was previously observed in Zerbst, indicate that this alert flight is still detached from one of the old fighter regiments in Zerbst. The alert flight was probably detached from Zerbst because the new fighter regiment in Merseburg is not equipped with crews adequately trained for this purpose.

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- (4) The plane [redacted] was previously observed in Zerbst. These jet trainers are probably detached to various units.

- (5) Aircraft [redacted] in the Soviet Zone of Germany for the first time. [redacted] on a plane in Koethen. [redacted] a crate in Koethen.

- (6) The parachute jumps observed probably are a part of the regular training program of student pilots. The marking on the rudder assembly of the LI-2 is reported for the first time.

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- (7) The two parachutes which did not open completely were probably cargo parachutes.

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- (8) Such aircraft were previously observed. They probably are special trainers equipped with special radar sets.
- (9) More MiG-15s were probably parked in the hangars. According to previous information, the regiment is equipped with at least 31 MiG-15s.
- (10) The AAA unit is reported for the first time from Kersoburg airfield. Its arrival agrees with the protective measure which was apparently ordered for all airfields of the Twenty-Fourth Air Army. Some of these airfields were observed to be equipped with such an AAA unit after April 1952. The AA guns are probably 37-mm guns. The set is believed to be an automatic tracking gun-laying set of type GSR-504. For location of AA gun emplacements, see Annex.

- (11) A RUS-2 type set was reported [REDACTED]

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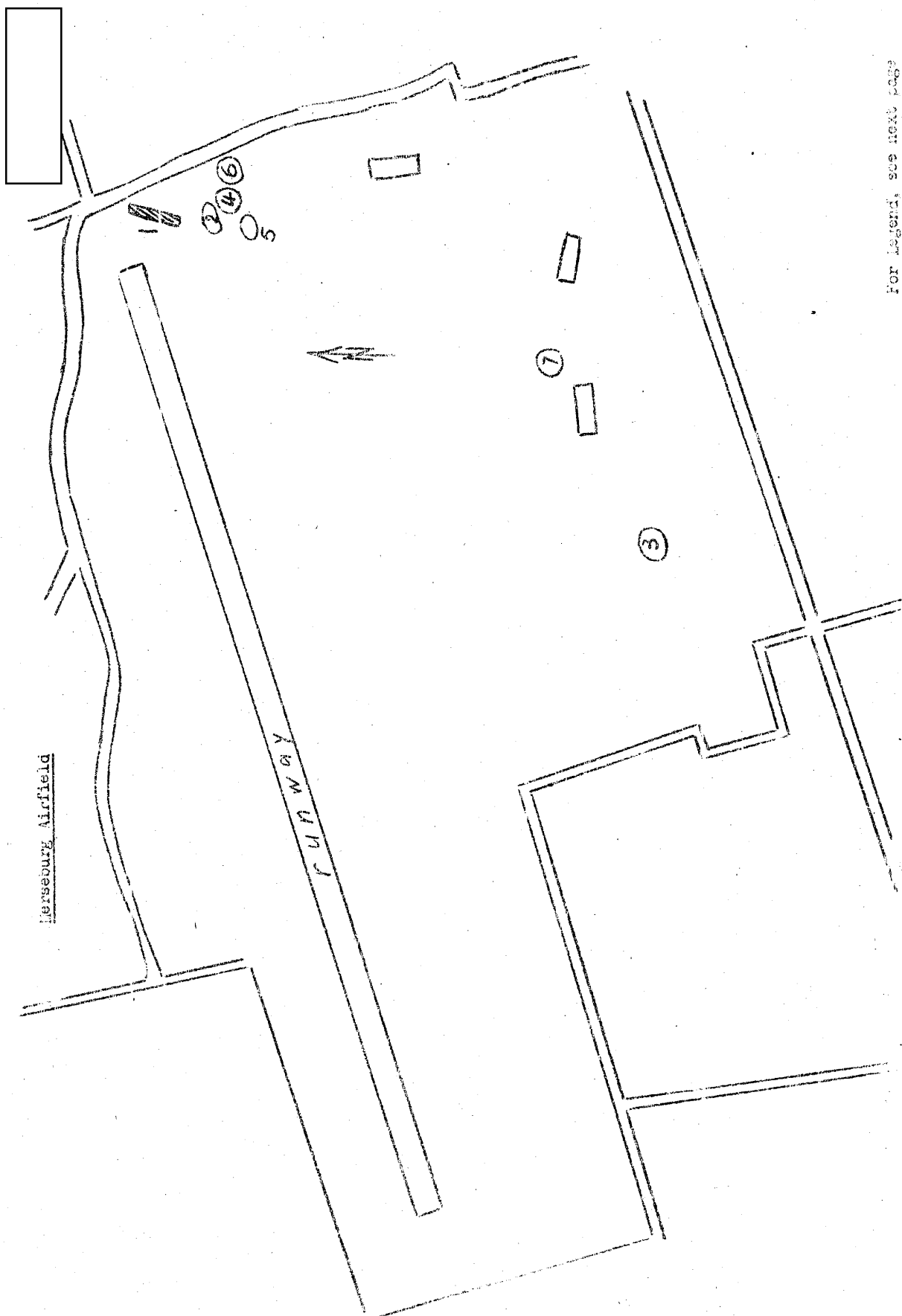
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For legend, see next page

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Annex 1 to

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Location Sketch of Mersburg Airfield

Legend:

- 1 Nine parked MIG-15s
- 2 Motor vehicle park with 1 red fire truck; 5 or 6 house trailers; 1 vehicle with open superstructure, occupied by 4 or 5 men with a white and red signal flag; 5 tank trucks with camouflage paint; and 5 or 6 sedans
- 3 AA gun emplacement, probably with six guns
- 4 Six AA guns emplaced in a circle about 100 meters in diameter
- 5 Ten three-axle trucks and three two-axle personnel carriers; all vehicles of US construction type
- 6 Thirty brown tents arranged in five rows of six tents, each with a capacity of about 10 men
- 7 AA gun emplacement, probably with six guns

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